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### ENG 4763-600: Advanced Fiction Writing

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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# **ENG 4763-600: Advanced Fiction Writing (3 cr hrs)**

## **Fall 2020 \* Online**

### **Instructor:**

Dr. Bess Winter

[bwkosinec@eiu.edu](mailto:bwkosinec@eiu.edu)

Office: All office hours will be held online this semester,

Office Hours: M 11am-1pm, W 11am-12pm, F 11am-12pm or by appointment. Please sign up for office hours on my "Office Hours Sign-Up Sheet" by the night before at the latest so I can schedule a private conferencing room for us.

### **Required Texts & Materials:**

Selected readings, available on d2l

### **Course Description:**

This class continues and refines the skills you learned in Intermediate Fiction Writing. It assumes that you understand the workshop process and basic concepts of writer's craft and revision (a great primer for these concepts: *Writing Fiction*, by Janet Burroway, Elizabeth Stuckey-French & Ned Stuckey-French).

You will read a challenging array of short fiction and write three of your own pieces in response to this work. You'll be asked to write in new and possibly unfamiliar forms, to both hone and widen your creative interests, and to aim for excellence at the story and sentence-level. I

### **Objectives:**

By the end of this course you will:

- Have read and familiarized yourself with the work of a range of contemporary short story writers;
- Be familiar with/have discussed several advanced craft-based concepts;
- Have three workshopped story drafts, and one revised draft (if undergraduate) or two revised drafts (if graduate student)

### **If you are experiencing trauma or distress**

Please note that, while writing can be a very personal act, this class is not a therapeutic environment and should not be taken in place of therapy. If you are experiencing personal issues, depression, anxiety, trauma, etc, your best resource is always the EIU Counseling Clinic, 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Human Services Building, which takes walk-in appointment requests and can also be reached at 217-581-3413 during the day, and 1-866-567-2400 in case of after-hours emergency. Do not hesitate to take advantage of this resource—it's yours. As a

State of Illinois employee, I'm a Mandated Reporter and must also report incidents of sexual assault or violence to our Title IX Coordinator.

### **Assignments & Grading (out of 1000 points)**

Discussion Board Posts and Replies – 200

Workshop participation --300

Workshop discussion leadership—100

D2L activity/course completion/meetings – 100

Revised Final Portfolio (1 revised story if undergraduate; two stories if graduate-level)– 150

Artist's Statement – 150

*\*I reserve the right to hold pop quizzes and minor writing assignments as the class's needs arise, as well as make minor changes to the syllabus in accordance with the class's needs. If any changes are made, you will be notified by email.*

### **Workshop**

#### *Workshop Responses*

You will be prepared for every workshop class by doing the following:

- 1) Write comments in the margins of story up for discussion.
- 2) Write a 1-page critique for each peer-written story we read this semester.

#### *Workshop Leadership*

You will be responsible for leading two workshop discussions this term. You'll introduce your peer's story by a) summing up your understanding of the story's plot, goals, influences, and possibly its relationship to the writer's previous work and b) presenting the class with 2-3 questions/concerns you'd like us to address during the workshop. Your questions and insights should be respectful and deeply considered.

#### *Workshop Submissions*

You will workshop two of the three pieces you write for this class. Stories will be submitted on their specified due dates via d2l dropbox. Because workshop involves a significant investment of time and thinking from your peers, it's important to keep on top of these submission deadlines so they have adequate time to consider your work. Speak to me if an emergency comes up so we have time to make alternate arrangements. Students should post their responses on d2l. **Stories should be between 4 and 15 pages in length.** It goes without saying that in this course words are important. Sentences are important. Grammar, syntax, spelling: all of these elements matter as much as the creative content of the work, itself. Before you submit anything for workshop, please respect your classmates' time by proofreading it. At the end of the term you'll turn in a portfolio of revised fiction.

## **Final Portfolio**

This will contain your revised short story (if undergrad) or two revised short stories (if graduate student). Fiction should be double-spaced with one-inch margins. Please include, also, a 3-5 page artist's statement.

### *Artist's Statement*

In this statement you will discuss your revision process (the decisions you made, how you made those decisions, and what effect you see them having on your work) as a writer — ie. the way we discuss writer's craft in class. Make references to craft/technique, and quote directly from your previous assignments, if you'd like. You may also refer to any of the readings we've done over the course of the semester.

## **Course Policies**

### **Technical Requirements**

To take this course, you must be able to do the following:

- Regularly access the Internet, using a laptop or desktop computer
- Download and upload email attachments
- Use Microsoft Word
- Use Collaborate Ultra and Kaltura for audio/video communications
- Use Adobe Reader (free download) or Preview (for Mac) to read PDF files
- Install software
- Stream online video
- Use a webcam and microphone

### **Digital Decorum, or 'Netiquette'**

Constructive university learning environments require professors and students to respect differences—of background, thought, opinion, and belief. This notion holds special significance in our online literature course, where you will be asked to routinely engage with your classmates' perspectives, experiences, and ideas. Therefore, respect will serve as the guiding principle and bedrock expectation of our work together this semester.

Here are some best practices for communicating in our online classroom:

- Healthy discourse provides room for differences of opinion; however, disagreements should, without exception, be respectfully expressed.
- Keep in mind that sarcasm is more difficult to understand without tonal cues and body language.
- When you're replying to a discussion board post, please summarize the portion of the original post that has inspired your response.
- Avoid unnecessary repetition. Privilege concision and rely on the substance of your ideas to meet suggested word counts.
- Since our discussions will draw extensively from stories and craft essays, be sure to clearly indicate direct quotes and, when possible, provide page numbers.

The following content will not be permitted and will, furthermore, be referred for disciplinary action:

- Illegal materials
- Harassing or threatening comments
- Harmful, abusive, or sexually explicit statements

### **Submitting Assignments**

Stories will be uploaded to discussion boards or d2l dropboxes as MS Word files (please do not link to MS Word online documents—export the document as .docx and attach the file to your submission).

### **Instructor Response Time**

I will check the course daily Monday through Friday and periodically during weekends. You can expect an email response from me within 48 hours (please use panthermail, not d2l email—I can't guarantee I will see an email sent through d2l).

### **Learner Interaction and Participation**

Your engagement in this course will be measured, more than any other way, by the quality and quantity of your discussion board posts, which account for **20 percent of your final grade**. Discussion board prompts and expectations will vary throughout the term; however, each discussion module will require you to post original threads and provide thorough, thoughtful responses to your classmates.

In addition to the discussion board, your participation will be evaluated based on the regularity and depth of your engagement with course materials, your participation in digital conferences/meetings, your engagement with workshop (either on discussion boards or face-to-face) and your D2L activity. These behaviors account for **10 percent of your final grade**.

### **Late Work and Make-Up Work**

Because this is a workshop class, it's important to get your work—particularly any story that will be up for workshop—submitted on time so that your classmates have a chance to read it. However, we're

### **Plagiarism**

*EIU English Department's Statement on Plagiarism:* Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

**Please note that submitting work you have completed/are completing for another class counts as self-plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and will be treated as such unless you get permission from me first. Permission is granted on a case-by-case basis.**

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

### **The Student Success Center**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

### **Accommodation for Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and are in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Stop by Ninth Street Hall, room 2022, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

Once you have received your accommodations letter, please meet with me immediately, during office hours, in order for us to plan on arrangements specific to your needs and this course's assignments.

### **Technical Support**

If you need assistance with D2L, call D2L Support toll free at 1-877-325-7778. Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Email and Chat options are also available on the "My Home" page after logging in to D2L. Other D2L Resources, including a D2L Orientation course for students, are available on the "My Home" page. If you are experiencing less than optimal D2L Brightspace performance, review the D2L Brightspace Performance Checklist to assess the issue.

For technical questions related to other software, hardware, network issues, EIU NetID/password, or Panthermail, contact the ITS Helpdesk at 217-581-4357 during regular business hours, or submit a help ticket at <https://techsupport.eiu.edu/>. If you have a question related to course content, please contact your instructor.

### **Schedule**

The dates below are tentative; I reserve the right to make adjustments for the benefit of the class.

Module	Assignments
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Module 1, Introductions and Craft Review: <b>Aug 24-Sep 6</b>	--Workshop sign-up --Readings/Viewings --Discussion posts --Creative activities
Module 2, Relationships between POV and Form: <b>Sep 7-20</b>	--Discussion posts --Readings --Story due
Module 3, Workshop: <b>Sep 21-Oct 4</b>	--Discussion posts --Discussion leadership
Module 4, Writing About Power: <b>Oct 5-18</b>	--Discussion posts --Readings --Story due
Module 5, Workshop: <b>Oct 19-Nov 1</b>	--Discussion posts --Discussion leadership
Module 6, Writing with Research: <b>Nov 2-15</b>	--Discussion posts --Readings --Story due
Module 7, Workshop: <b>Nov 16-Dec 6</b>	--Discussion posts --Discussion leadership
Module 8, Revision: <b>Dec 7-11</b>	--Discussion posts --Exercises
Exam Week: <b>Dec 14-18</b>	-- <b>Final portfolio due Thurs Dec 17 via d2l dropbox</b>